



WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Chesterfield County Police Department, Crime Prevention Unit (804) 318 - 8699

Workplace Violence is any physical contact, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting. It includes but is not limited to beatings, stabbings, shooting, rapes, threats, obscene phone calls, intimidation, foul and abusive language. Close to 2 million American workers are victims of workplace violence each year. Educating employees and enforcing zero-tolerance policies help deter acts of violence, but employees must report incidents, no matter how small, for programs to work.

Employee warning signs include:

- Sudden changes in behavior
- Decrease in productivity
- Inability to concentrate
- Sudden withdrawal from friends/acquaintances
- Problems with attendance or tardiness
- Newly acquired poor personal hygiene
- Sabotage or theft of property of employer or co-worker
- New use of abusive language
- Spreading of rumors and gossip
- Argumentative
- Sees self as victimized by management and/or co-workers
- Makes harassing phone calls or leaves intimidating notes
- Tends to be a “loner”
- Talks about suicide
- Fascination with weapons or news of violent acts



As with other risks, workplace violence preparation begins with planning. Regardless of your organization's size, it is much more effective to spot and address potential dangers beforehand, rather than suffer the consequences later.

Components of a workplace violence prevention program:

- Written workplace violence policy statement
- Physical security assessment
- Procedures for addressing threats
- Consistent enforcement of behavioral standards
- Management and employee training
- Designation and training of an incident response team
- Crisis response measures

Remember that planning and preparation are continually-evolving processes, so stay abreast of the latest workplace violence prevention measures, educate employees and train frequently.

